

March 6, 2022

Dear Co-Chairs Christine Cohen and Joseph Gresko, Vice-Chairs Derek Slap and Christine Palm and members of the Environment Committee

I request your support of Raised House Bill 5291, An Act Authorizing Bonding for Bikeways, Greenways, and Recreational Trails.

Despite an impressive record of providing assistance for a long list of trail related projects, the Recreational Trails Grant Program has had an intermittent and insufficient level of funding history. As you are aware there has been an overwhelming demand for the initial \$3 million authorized this year. The appropriate response and wisest investment is to substantially increase the bond authorization. HB 5291 is a major step to accomplish this.

One often unappreciated yet essential activity supported by the grant program is the upkeep of existing trails and structures to assure a safe, healthy, and pleasant experience by all outdoor enthusiasts. A consistent and sufficient level of funding will aid in effecting prompt restoration before conditions deteriorate requiring substantial greater resources.

Other projects in need of funding involve expansion of all types of trails to meet the significantly increased needs of the public for outdoor recreational spaces. One such project in my hometown of Torrington proposes to construct a segment of the Sue Grossman Greenway in an urban section of the city. Currently most trails are located in the outskirts of town and in forested areas. This multi-use space will positively impact the surrounding neighborhoods by providing convenient recreational opportunities and make a large contribution to the development of a walkable city.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely;
Thomas Kandefer
1821 Winsted Rd
Torrington CT 06790